

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A facility retrieval apparatus comprising:  
an area name dictionary stored with area names;  
a classified name dictionary stored with classified names  
of facilities;

a facility name dictionary stored with facility names;  
input means for receiving and taking in said area names,  
said classified names and said facility names;

identifying means for identifying names received and  
simultaneously distinguishing between area names and classified  
names as the occasion demands; and

extracting means for extracting a facility name belonging  
to the name identified by said identifying means from said facility  
name dictionary.

2. A facility retrieval apparatus comprising:  
an area name dictionary stored with area names;  
a classified name dictionary stored with classified names  
of facilities;

a facility name dictionary stored with facility names;  
input means for receiving and taking in said area names,  
said classified names and said facility names;

identifying means for deciding whether the name received  
is an area name or a classified name;

number-of-facilities extracting means for extracting the  
number of facilities belonging to the name identified by said

identifying means from said facility name dictionary;

extracting means for extracting a facility name belonging to the name identified by said identifying means from said facility name dictionary in case where the number of facility names extracted by said number-of-facilities extracting means is equal to or smaller than the predetermined number thereof; and

urging means for performing narrowing-down further in case where the number of facility names extracted by said number-of-facilities extracting means is greater than the predetermined number thereof.

3. A facility retrieval apparatus comprising:

an area name dictionary stored with area names;

a classified name dictionary stored with classified names  
of facilities;

a facility name dictionary stored with facility names;

number-of-facility-names storage means for storing the number of facility names belonging to each area name and each classified name;

input means for receiving and taking in said area names, said classified names and said facility names;

identifying means for deciding whether the name received is an area name or a classified name;

number-of-facilities extracting means for extracting the number of facilities belonging to the name identified by said identifying means from said facility name dictionary;

extracting means for extracting a facility name belonging to the name identified by said identifying means from said facility name dictionary in case where the number of facility names extracted by said number-of-facilities extracting means is equal to or smaller than the predetermined number thereof; and

urging means for performing narrowing-down further in case where the number of facility names extracted by said number-of-facilities extracting means is greater than the predetermined number thereof.

4. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 2 or 3, wherein when the number of facility names extracted by said number-of-facilities extracting means is equal to or greater than the predetermined number thereof and in case where the name identified by said identifying means is the classified name, said urging means urges the inputting of the area name and wherein said extracting means extracts a facility name belonging to both the area and classified names thus identified from said facility name dictionary.

5. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 2 or 3, wherein when the number-of-facility names extracted by said number-of-facilities extracting means is equal to or greater than the predetermined number thereof and in case where the name identified by said identifying means is the area name, said urging means urges the inputting of a further detailed area name; and

wherein when the name identified by said identifying means is the classified name, on the other hand, said urging means urges the inputting of the further detailed classified name.

6. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said input means is voice input means for inputting voice.

7. A facility retrieval apparatus as claim in any one of claims 2 to 5, wherein said urging means reports the number of facility names extracted by said extracting means.

8. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein names provided by combining a plurality of classified names are stored in said classified name dictionary.

9. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein negative names other than the classified names are provided in said classified name dictionary.

10. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 5, wherein in case where said identifying means is unable to specify one name out of the names received, said urging means urges the inputting of a name for the specifying purpose.

11. A facility retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein in case where said identifying means is unable to specify one name out of the names received, said urging means urges the inputting of a further detailed name belonging to the classified or area name as for the specifying purpose.

12. A facility retrieval method comprising the steps of: acquiring the predetermined number of facility names from area names and classified facility names received in accordance with a given procedure by referring to dictionaries; and

providing a facility name dictionary in case where the number of facility names is equal to or smaller than the predetermined number of facilities and retrieving the facility name received.

13. A facility retrieval method as claimed in claim 12 further comprising the steps of:

deciding whether the name received is an area name or a classified name;

urging the inputting of a name belonging to any name other than the name to which one distinguished name belongs; and

extracting a facility name corresponding to one name and any other name both.